EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION HANDBOOK
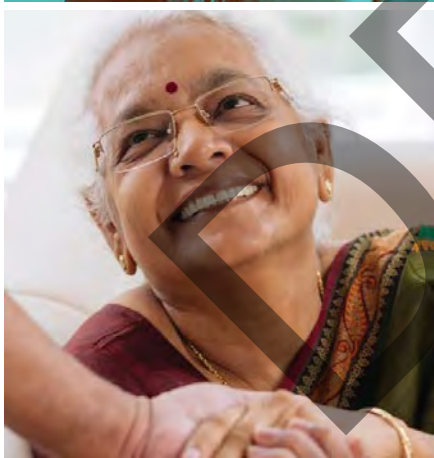
A GUIDE TO EQUITABLE, DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICES IN THE CITY OF HAMILTON

DRAFT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

—SECTION 1—

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GUIDE

WHY THIS TOOLKIT?

This Equity, Diversity and Inclusion toolkit is intended to help the City of Hamilton achieve its equity, diversity and inclusion objectives, open channels of communication within the City, and listen to the voices of the diverse community. As populations change and communities become increasingly diversified, it is becoming even more important for municipalities to create and implement equity and inclusion frameworks that recognize and respond appropriately to the changing demographics of the community.

> ❝ Cities must become places where equity principles are valued and practiced... ❞

A community's diversity is not restricted to ethno-racial or ethno-cultural elements. Rather, it is a measure of the reality of a population in which unique and identifiable characteristics distinguish individuals and groups and contain intersecting dimensions, including ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status. There is a natural expectation of citizens within an increasingly diverse population that their governments will provide services and programs that meet their needs and aspirations. In addition, there are tremendous pressures on municipal governments to effectively recruit and retain employees who reflect the diversity of their environment and fill vacancies in an increasingly competitive job market.

Cities must become places where equity principles are valued and practiced and adjust to meet new and emerging challenges. When this happens, residents gain access to an equitable share of goods and services found within its boundaries.

This document is a practical guide to support the City in achieving its equity, diversity and inclusion goals. It includes several checklists which provide useful tips for promoting equity, diversity and inclusion principles in the city.

WHAT DOES EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION MEAN?

UNDERSTANDING EQUITY

Equity is not to be confused with equality. Equity is a term that describes fairness and justice in outcomes. It is not about the equal delivery of services or distribution of resources, it is about recognizing diversity and disadvantage, and directing resources and services towards those most in need to ensure equal outcomes for all. Equity is not achieved by providing identical treatment to everyone regardless of individual circumstance. Equity is achieved when differences are acknowledged and the stories, ideas and experiences within our community are recognized and valued.

> 66 Equity is not achieved by providing identical treatment to everyone regardless of individual circumstance. 99

The City of Hamilton's Equity and Inclusion Policy and supporting documents state that the principle of equity underpins an inherent belief in the human rights of all persons. In addition, it states a belief that "in Canada's highly differentiated socioeconomic society, all stakeholder communities, with the groups and individuals that they include, have the right to barrier free access to resources, decision-making, expertise, experience, connections, information and opportunities through solutions that match their needs.

UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

There are many different definitions of diversity, but they all tend to focus on the variations that occur within populations that enhance the survivability of the population. In human populations, many distinct variations reflect dimensions of diversity which are hard to change. They relate to inborn or other human differences that exert an important influence on our socialization and have an ongoing impact throughout the lives of individuals. These are primary dimensions of diversity and include: age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities/qualities and race. Secondary dimensions of diversity are ones that may change or be changed over time. They reflect differences that may impact our lives differently at different times. These may include educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, experience and religious beliefs.

UNDERSTANDING I N C L U S I O N

DIVERSITY IS A FACT, INCLUSION IS A CHOICE

> *An inclusive society is a society that overrides differences of race, gender, class, generation, and geography, and ensures inclusion, equality of opportunity as well as capability of all members of the society to determine an agreed set of social institutions that govern social interaction.* (Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Social Integration, Helsinki, July 2008)

Inclusion is an approach. It is a way of doing business that appreciates and responds to the dimensions of diversity. It is part of the standard operating procedures that are incorporated into the DNA of the community and the city.

"*Inclusion is the act of creating environments in which any individual or group can feel welcomed, valued, respected, supported and can fully participate. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people*" (Towards Toronto 2015)

Many diverse groups have been silenced because they feel excluded and have not seen themselves as full participants within the system. What is most significant in creating an inclusive society is the engagement of the individual in the process by which society is managed, ordered and represented.

Inclusion therefore requires that one:
- hears voices that have been quiet;
- listens to viewpoints that have been excluded;
- incorporates minority knowledge and perspectives into community dialogue; and
- makes a conscious effort to validate, honor and respect diverse views, experiences and realities.

Developing inclusive approaches begins with self-awareness and the courage and willingness to uncover the unconscious biases we all have. As Albert Einstein once said, "You cannot solve a problem with the same consciousness that created it."

For equity, diversity and inclusion practices to be effective, they require that we focus on influencing behavior through self-reflection, dialogue, education and information sharing at all levels. These approaches can be achieved by the application of an equity and inclusion lens in the work we do.

UNDERSTANDING SYSTEMIC DISCRIMINATION

The Ontario Human Rights Commission described systemic racism as patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate disadvantage for racialized persons.

When discrimination happens because of a business practice, a workplace policy or a government program, this is called "systemic discrimination" because the discrimination is not limited to a single incident or occurrence. Systemic discrimination can affect a large number of people.

> *'Intention" to discriminate is not required to prove that discrimination occurred. This form of discrimination often refers to an "indirect or unintended negative effect or impact impact of certain standards, policies, or behaviour"*. (Ontario Human Rights Commission)

Systemic discrimination may include requiring job candidates to have Canadian work experience, not providing a wheelchair accessible washroom in a public place, setting unreasonably strict vision or hearing standards for employment, not allowing head covers worn for religious reasons, imposing a more difficult licensing process on professionals from certain countries, height and/or size requirements for a job that exclude most women and members of certain ancestral groups, English-only rules in a workplace, and female-dominated occupations requiring comparable skill and education being paid less than their male-dominated counterparts (Manitoba Human Rights Commission)

> "*Systemic racism is difficult to detect because it disguises itself in a structured way and systematically ends up "giving advantages to some and disadvantages to others." It is founded on the notion that cultural assumptions about the dominant group are the norm to which other cultural practices or rules should conform.* Evelyn Myrie, The Hamilton Spectator

Addressing systemic discrimination requires an approach that offers an opportunity to enact change while moving beyond thinking about individuals and individual organizations, single problems, and single solutions. It entails thinking about systems—policy systems, education systems, social service systems, information systems, and technology systems. (www.publicpolicy.com)

Equity, diversity and inclusion principles help to identify and remove barriers and reinforce best practices in the planning, development and evaluation of policies, services and programs for equity seeking groups. These principles are intended to provide fair opportunities for all people.

SEEING THROUGH VARIOUS LENSES

The equity, diversity and inclusion lens ensures the development of policies and programs that respond to the broad diversity of our community—as our city becomes more diverse we must find ways to ensure that our needs and concerns are captured and addressed in policy and program development.

When considering the impact of policies, services and programs on specific groups, it is advised to apply a 'lens' analysis. How does the policy, service or program look through the lens of various communities, such as gender, race, ability, etc.? Applying a lens for each community is important, and some of them will be discussed in this handbook. However, the same approach can be made for each diverse consideration.

> " ...as our city becomes more diverse we must find ways to ensure that our needs and concerns are captured... "

WHAT IS AN EQUITY AND INCLUSION LENS?

Equity and inclusion lens is a transformative tool used to improve planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more equitable outcomes from policies and programs. The lens utilizes a set of principles, reflective questions, and processes that focuses at the individual, institutional, and systemic levels.

WHY SHOULD GOVERNMENTS USE AN EQUITY AND INCLUSION LENS?

Without intentional intervention, such as the use of an equity lens, institutions and structures will continue to perpetuate inequities. The lens can be used in planning, development, implementation and evaluation of policies, services and programs delivered by the City. Routine use of an equity lens explicitly integrates racial equity into governmental operations and ensures that City services, programs, budgets, resources, grants and decisions result in equitable outcomes for everyone.

GENDER EQUITY LENS

Applying a gender equity lens enables us to consider policies, services and programs from a gendered point of view. How will different genders be impacted by our decisions? By considering the answers to these questions, we may design our policies, services and programs to benefit both genders.

In considering the historic discrepancies between genders, a gender equity lens allows us to ensure a diverse range of women's voices are considered in the decision-making process. This further analysis brings gender consideration into the decision-making process.

An equity analysis which looks at the differential impact of proposed or existing policies and programs on gender must be embedded into all assessment tools. When gender analysis is used, governments and policy makers make more informed decisions by considering gender issues. This approach serves to eliminate discrimination against women based on their gender and thus contributes to the advancement of women's equality and gender equity.

INTERSECTIONAL LENS

Intersectionality is a framework for conceptualizing a person, group of people, or social problem as affected by a number of discriminations and disadvantages. It takes into account people's overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.

For example, a white woman is penalized by her gender but has the advantage of race. A black woman is disadvantaged by her gender and her race. A Latina lesbian experiences discrimination because of her ethnicity, her gender and her sexual orientation.

Without an intersectional lens, events and movements that aim to address injustice towards one group may end up perpetuating systems of inequities towards other groups. Being aware of these complexities allows better community planning.

WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY?

http://www.ywboston.org/2017/03/what-is-intersectionality-and-what-does-it-have-to-do-with-me/

https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/01/19/feminism-intersectionality-racism-sexism-class/96633750/

BENEFITS OF USING AN EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION LENS

An equity, diversity and inclusion lens provides a way to consciously attend to the needs of an individual, group or community and remove barriers that result in unequal outcomes to marginalized groups. The lens can be used to more accurately assess the community's needs and bring potential solutions into sharper focus.

An equity, diversity and inclusion lens helps to:

- increase awareness about diversity, equity, inclusion and intersectionality;
- allow the incorporation and recognition of diverse perspectives in the workplace and community;
- improve programs, services and resource allocations including budgeting;
- create positive and respectful work and community environments;
- attract new members;
- improve accessibility and customer service for all;
- ensure equity of outcomes;
- open new communication channels.

Equity and Inclusion Lenses can be used across all city departments and areas of work including:

1. Communications
2. Engaging Community and Staff
3. Gathering Information / Research
4. Leading and Supervising
5. Planning: Services, Projects/Programs, Events
6. Policy Development
7. Budgeting
8. Recruiting and Hiring

—SECTION 2—

EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EVENT PLANNING

WHAT IS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

Community engagement is the process of working collaboratively with community groups to address issues that impact the well-being of those within. Community engagement increases community cohesion and allows for the community to have ownership over the outcomes that will ultimately impact them. (Tamarack Institute)

A key principle of community engagement is ensuring that all groups and communities have an opportunity to equitably participate in the community planning processes. Getting diverse voices around the table throughout the engagement process makes for a stronger and more empowered community.

In 2014, the City of Hamilton approved its own engagement charter to "empower all residents of Hamilton to be actively involved in shaping an engaged and inclusive community"
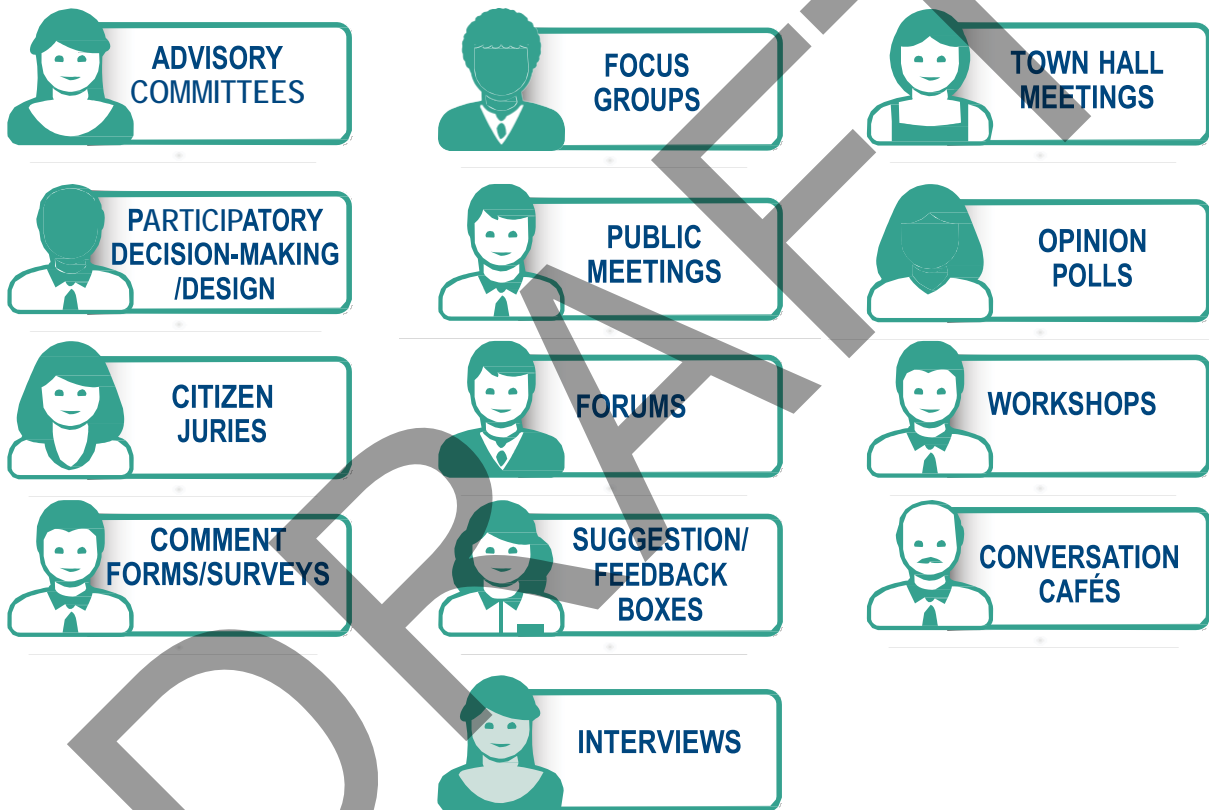
This equity, diversity and inclusion guide provides some practical steps to help the city achieve its engagement goals.:

- improve participation in civic activities.

- improve interaction and participation between residents, stakeholders, elected representatives, and City staff.

- create opportunities for making the City of Hamilton and its residents more accessible and accountable to each other.

ENGAGEMENT METHODS:

The engagement method you choose should be appropriate for your target group and based on the type of input you need. Examine any method(s) you are considering for its effectiveness with your target group and its relevance to your purpose.

Here are a few community engagement methods you might consider:

- ADVISORY COMMITTEES
- FOCUS GROUPS
- TOWN HALL MEETINGS
- PARTICIPATORY DECISION-MAKING /DESIGN
- PUBLIC MEETINGS
- OPINION POLLS
- CITIZEN JURIES
- FORUMS
- WORKSHOPS
- COMMENT FORMS/SURVEYS
- SUGGESTION/ FEEDBACK BOXES
- CONVERSATION CAFÉS
- INTERVIEWS

BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

Community engagements might be hampered by several barriers including, but not limited to the following:

- Language limitations;
- Accessibility issues;
- Lack of time and resources (e.g., childcare, transportation, etc.);
- Lack of trust in governments and institutions; and
- Fatigue from past engagements that led to few or no results.

To begin the process of building an inclusive community engagement process, you might consider asking the following key questions:

- Who is missing from this work?
- What is the cause of this exclusion?
- What can we do to encourage inclusion?

USING AN EQUITY LENS IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORK:

Policies and programs affect people differently. Depending on their needs and challenges, some people are more at risk of exclusion due to:

- Income
- Race, Ethnicity, Aboriginal ancestry
- Language
- Marital Status
- Gender Identity/Gender Expression
- Immigration Status, Length of Time in Canada
- Age
- Physical or Mental Ability
- Family Status

Using an inclusion lens helps to reduce the inequalities various people experience.

PLANNING AND MANAGING INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENTS

Reflective Questions Checklist for planning inclusive community engagements including conferences, workshops, town hall or public meetings, forums, conversation cafes, etc.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER			COMMENTS
Is our planning team representative of our community and workplace composition?	☐	☐	
Do we check to make sure that the event date(s) do not conflict with special events such as religious ceremonies, celebrations or special days?	☐	☐	
Do we hold events at times that are convenient to most people, e.g. seniors, youth/students, working parents, etc.?	☐	☐	
Do we provide adequate notice for participants to make necessary arrangements for transportation, attendant or childcare?	☐	☐	
Are there on-site supports for child care, transportation and accommodation?	☐	☐	
Is an attendant care worker available on-site to assist those who require help due to disabilities?	☐	☐	
Is the venue accessible by public transportation?	☐	☐	
Is the physical space accessible for persons with disabilities e.g. wheelchair, walker, guide dogs, scooters?	☐	☐	
Are the aisles wide enough for the easy passage of someone using a mobility device?	☐	☐	

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Is there accessible parking close to the main entrance to the event?	☐	☐	
Do we book all necessary interpretation services and associated technology: ASL, language interpreters, oral deafblind interveners, certified interpreters; real-time, open, or closed captioning; written materials; a note taker; or assistive listening devices?	☐	☐	
Are the washrooms accessible for mobility i.e. wheelchair, guide dog?	☐	☐	
Are the washroom facilities inclusive and trans friendly?	☐	☐	
Is the event /meeting space scent and smoke free? (Provision made for Indigenous medicines)	☐	☐	
Are the stage and podium accessible?	☐	☐	
Are presenters asked to prepare accessible presentations and presentation materials?	☐	☐	
Do we set aside space in our event venues for spiritual observance/"interfaith-space"-where participants can go to pray, meditate, or reflect quietly. (Do we ensure rules are in place for sharing and that everyone behaves accordingly?).	☐	☐	

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Is the menu inclusive of a variety of dietary preferences considering medical, cultural and religious perspectives?	☐	☐	
Are all food products labelled?	☐	☐	
Do we build times into the program to accommodate health needs, prayers, food, etc.?	☐	☐	
Do we use plain language in our marketing and promotional materials?	☐	☐	
Do we train our staff /volunteers to use the pronoun preferred by a transgender person(s)?	☐	☐	
Do we have materials translated into different languages?	☐	☐	
Do we use the recommended font sizes in marketing and event materials?	☐	☐	
Do we use accessibility/inclusion symbols on marketing materials?	☐	☐	
Do we integrate culture and language into our program promotions?	☐	☐	
Do we promote the event in publications and on platforms used by our diverse audience including ethno-cultural publications?	☐	☐	
Do we use a variety of mediums for getting information out and inviting feedback? (e.g. websites, newspapers, flyers, broadcast media, diverse networks)	☐	☐	

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Do we engage in consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation, e.g. people living on a low-income people or seniors?	☐	☐	
Do we check with the First Nations community with whom we are meeting about any preferred salutations?	☐	☐	
Do we identify and use Indigenous land acknowledgment protocol (City of Hamilton)	☐	☐	
Do we provide information about activities and events, including details on accessibility of facilities and transportation options for older people?	☐	☐	
Do we collaborate or partner with specific community groups to increase participation of our target audience?	☐	☐	
Do we ensure that event sponsors and partners are committed to promoting and supporting racial diversity and inclusion?	☐	☐	
Do we instruct presenters, exhibitors, staff, and volunteers to avoid using language that may be offensive?	☐	☐	
Are our presenters/panelists representative of diverse groups?	☐	☐	

OTHER STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

- It is customary to acknowledge Indigenous Nations and their territory at the outset of any meeting.
- Use outreach workers or cultural facilitators to reach out to those who are isolated, including newcomers and low-income residents
- Provide diversity and inclusion training, including gender identity/ expression components to all staff and volunteers.
- Investigate alternative opportunities for input from groups and individuals who are unable to attend specific events.
- Host events at locations familiar to your audience such as places of worship, seniors centres, recreation/community facilities and cultural organizations.
- Provide discounted bus tickets to low income attendees.
- End programs on time as some people with disabilities have special transportation arrangements with very strict schedules.

COLLABORATION AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS:

It is important to have the right mix of partners around the table for successful outcomes of community planning initiatives. Ideally, this will include involving grassroots organizations, community agencies, cultural and religious groups along with governmental organizations and the private sector.

> 66 Collaborating with diverse organizations in your community can help you increase your impact. 99

Collaborating and partnering with various community organizations that are jointly driven to promote diversity initiatives and equitable outcomes for all community members is an effective strategy for engaging those who are isolated.

Collaborating with diverse organizations in your community helps you increase your impact. By focusing on intersectionality, you may find common goals with groups that serve other marginalized communities.

Using collaborative strategies leverages support for enrollment efforts and helps to more effectively reach diverse communities. City departments that choose to develop and nurture relationships with various community groups, such as seniors, LGBTQ+ or women, will be better able to respond to emerging needs. This approach serves to facilitate information sharing and create opportunities for building a more engaged community.

Working closely with existing City Advisory committees and community-based groups can be an effective way to engage residents who are isolated and ensure their voices are captured in community consultations and engagement initiatives.

From time to time, departmental staff might consider collaborating with community members who are on the front lines to help reach specific groups.

NEGOTIATING A PARTNERSHIP

1 Honor the relationship. The negotiation process involves partners you may work with over many years. If, in addition to the process of negotiating, your priorities include developing a relationship with your partners based on honest communication and trust, then it will be easier to know when to bend on a particular point, considering both short- and long-term costs and benefits.

2 Create a negotiation environment that encourages innovation. Partners expand partnership options by engaging in brainstorming techniques and thinking "outside the box." If partners can respond to new ideas and be open to the unexpected, they will find unlimited opportunities and be able to take a fresh look at their practices and beliefs about serving their clients.

3 Be realistic and fair. Partners are more likely to follow up on their commitments and less likely to circumvent the negotiation process if they feel the agreement is fair. Sometimes a neutral, external facilitator can help to ensure that negotiations are realistic and fair to all. Partners should always consult with their programs' legal and financial advisors before finalizing an agreement.

4 Recognize that each partnership is unique. Each partnership needs to be structured to meet the needs of the organizations involved. Although you may know of an interesting and successful partnership in a nearby community, the partnership you are designing need not be the same.

5 Engage in active listening. Focus on what others say, both on their actual words and the underlying meaning. This will help you understand the interests upon which agreement can be based. When your response makes it clear that you have really been listening, your partners, too, may be more prepared to listen. Active listening can produce better, longer-lasting relationships.

6 Know your bottom line. We all enter negotiations knowing what we ideally want. Thinking through alternatives to the ideal outcome, however, allows you to understand your points of flexibility. Be clear about fallback positions and their consequences before you start to negotiate. Also, evaluate your partners' options beforehand. In negotiation, it is important to think several moves in advance and anticipate your partners' needs.

7 Know the difference between "positions" and "interests." When you focus on your organization's motivation for partnering and your potential partners' motivation, then you are looking at interests. When you get bogged down in achieving a particular goal, then you are distracted by positions. Interests form the building blocks of lasting agreements.

8 Come prepared to commit resources. Any request to take on greater responsibility must be accompanied by an offer of resources. Approach each issue with an earnest commitment to support the goals and the needed change. Resources may take the form of funding, staff, materials, supplies, transportation, facilities, or any combination of these. An adequate commitment of funds and resources demonstrates your commitment and full support of the partnership.

Source: Engaging your Community: A toolkit for Partnership, Collaboration and Action

COLLABORATION AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1.　How can our partnerships help build bridges with diverse groups?
2.　What strategies are in place to foster collaboration with targeted communities?
3.　What are the existing relationships we have with diverse groups?

The following worksheet will help to identify potential collaborators/partners.

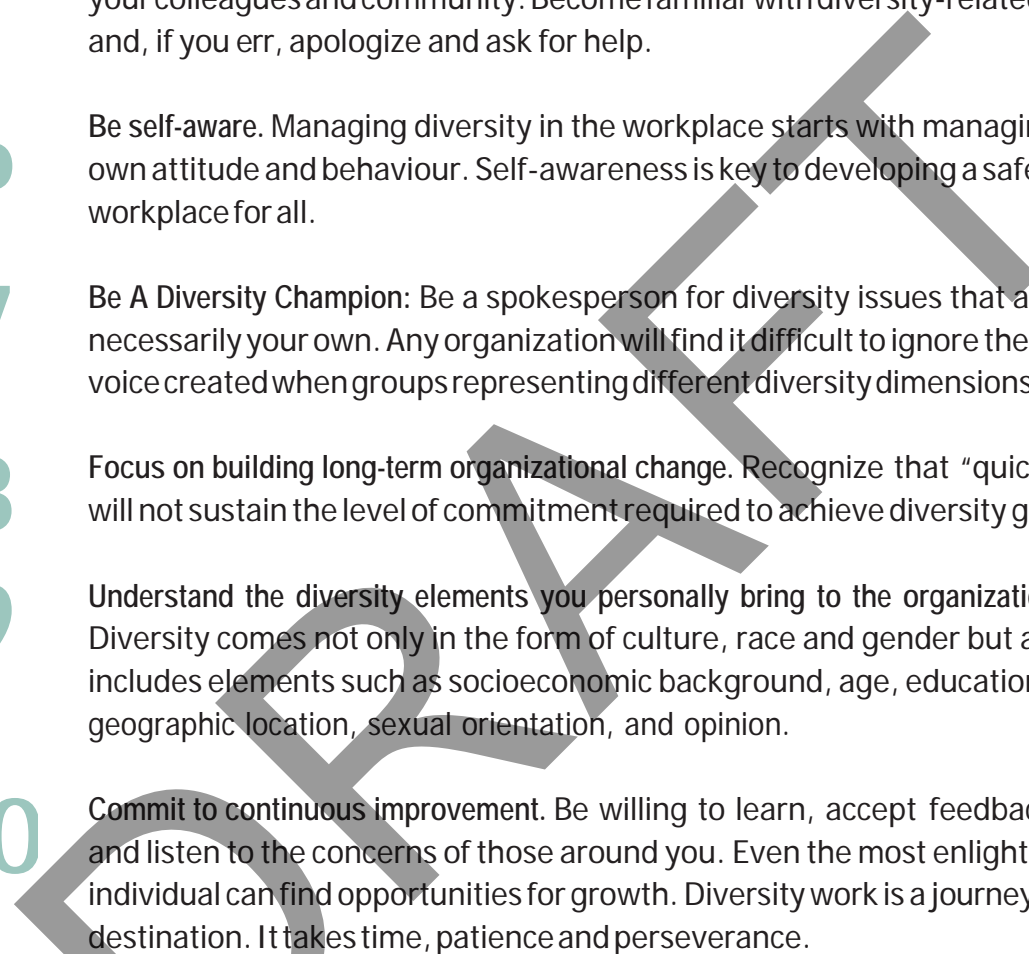| TARGET COMMUNITY	KEY CONTACT(S):	IDEAS FOR ENGAGEMENT

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—SECTION 3—

EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

Recent studies show that companies with more diversity – whether defined by gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other dimensions – are more likely to have a competitive advantage over less-diverse companies. They financially outperform companies with less diversity and are better able to attract top talent; improve their customer orientation, employee satisfaction, and decision making. (McKinsey and Company: Delivering through Diversity) The same holds true for non-profits or governments. Organizations and governments with a diverse workforce benefit from a workforce that is more innovative and productive.

10 MUST-HAVES FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION AT WORK

1 **Offer training.** Often employees are eager to join in the process of change but lack the know-how and confidence to act. It is important to provide ongoing education and training for all employees. Training curriculum should be inclusive of many diversity issues such as accessibility, positive space, and any content that addresses gender identity, racism, Islamophobia, Indigenous awareness or other issues facing vulnerable populations.

2 **Share the plan.** Equity, diversity and inclusion training is not enough. Employees should be aware of their workplace diversity policy, the policy's goals and know their connection to the overall organizational objectives. Communications are key in promoting this work. Equity, diversity and inclusion topics should be an important part of regular staff meetings.

3 **Lead from the top.** Leaders and managers set the tone and tenure of an organization. They must demonstrate a commitment to incorporate equity, diversity and inclusion policies into every aspect of the organization's function and purpose. The organization's leadership must also provide guidance, resources and support to ensure success within the organization at all levels.

4 **See beyond numbers.** Move away from conceptualizing diversity, equity and inclusion principles solely as a numbers-based goal and instead see its' potential to transform the institution into a vibrant community embedding equity, diversity and inclusion goals into its strategic plan. These principles are fundamental to an organization's operations and must be woven into the organizational fabric that governs the way business is conducted on a daily basis.

5 Become culturally competent. Take time to learn about different cultures, gender expressions/identity, races, religions and backgrounds represented by your colleagues and community. Become familiar with diversity-related terms and, if you err, apologize and ask for help.

6 Be self-aware. Managing diversity in the workplace starts with managing your own attitude and behaviour. Self-awareness is key to developing a safe and fair workplace for all.

7 Be A Diversity Champion: Be a spokesperson for diversity issues that are not necessarily your own. Any organization will find it difficult to ignore the powerful voice created when groups representing different diversity dimensions unite.

8 Focus on building long-term organizational change. Recognize that "quick fixes" will not sustain the level of commitment required to achieve diversity goals.

9 Understand the diversity elements you personally bring to the organization. Diversity comes not only in the form of culture, race and gender but also includes elements such as socioeconomic background, age, education level, geographic location, sexual orientation, and opinion.

10 Commit to continuous improvement. Be willing to learn, accept feedback, and listen to the concerns of those around you. Even the most enlightened individual can find opportunities for growth. Diversity work is a journey, not a destination. It takes time, patience and perseverance.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION LENS
IN THE WORKPLACE

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST: ROLE OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Does senior leadership regularly include diversity topics/themes for discussion at staff meetings?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership provide mentorship opportunities to diverse staff?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership support and create opportunities for staff from diverse backgrounds to develop new skills and access employment and work experience opportunities?	☐	☐	
Are senior leaders personally involved in diversity and inclusion training?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership dedicate resources to diversity and inclusion initiatives?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership recognize diversity and inclusion champions?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership support community involvement and outreach?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership provide funding for diversity and inclusion training/research?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership provide ongoing diversity and inclusion training and education?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership offer diversity and inclusion coaching support to front line managers?	☐	☐	
Does senior leadership celebrate success in achieving equity, diversity, and inclusion goals?	☐	☐	

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST: STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Is there an equity, diversity, and inclusion policy in place?	☐	☐	
Does the hiring process comply with or exceed all legal obligations with respect to: a) Charter of Rights and Freedoms b) Employment Standards c) The Ontario Human Rights Code d) Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) e) City of Hamilton Trans Protocol	☐	☐	
Are jobs advertised in various publications, media outlets, at job fairs and other events that serve equity seeking groups?	☐	☐	
Are people who have been historically excluded from society encouraged to apply for jobs? For example, racialized people, transgendered people, people with disabilities, First Nations, Métis and Inuit people, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, or people with multiple and overlapping identities?	☐	☐	
Do data collection forms related to "gender" include an option to opt out to allow trans staff confidentiality (as desired)?	☐	☐	
Does the organization monitor the diversity of the applicant pool and expand advertising efforts if unable to reach a diverse representation ?	☐	☐	
Do search committees and interview panels have diverse representation?	☐	☐	

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST: **STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Do recruitment experts and staff receive diversity and inclusion training, including LGBTQ+ positive space?	☐	☐	
Are recruitment experts trained in providing effective outreach and accommodations to prospective employees with disabilities?	☐	☐	
Do recruitment experts and staff receive diversity and inclusion training for positive space interviews?	☐	☐	
As a rule, is the recruitment panel expected to be mixed?	☐	☐	
Are interview panels comprised of individuals who contribute diverse backgrounds and experience relevant to the position being filled?	☐	☐	
Do interview questions validly test for skills, knowledge, and experience relevant to the position being filled?	☐	☐	
Is there a comfortable and accessible environment for interviewees, providing for trans and gender-variant people and people with disabilities?	☐	☐	
Is there a fair selection procedure, including objective, job-related interview questions; quantifiable rating and ranking processes; and consideration of meritorious factors?	☐	☐	
Are foreign work experiences and education recognized?	☐	☐	

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST: STAFF RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Do senior leadership and management teams provide support and create opportunities for staff from diverse backgrounds to develop new skills and access employment and work experience opportunities?	☐	☐	
Are organizational policies regularly reviewed by a diverse team to ensure they meet the needs of a diverse workforce?	☐	☐	
Are employees eligible for benefits for themselves and their families?	☐	☐	
Are there flexible work options for the majority of employees? For example, do staff have the option of working from home?	☐	☐	
Are there opportunities for employees to develop skills so that they can better perform their job?	☐	☐	

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Is diversity capacity building integrated into performance planning and evaluation?	☐	☐	
Does management identify how senior leadership is held accountable for diversity? For example, through performance standards, rewards and recognition?	☐	☐	
Does the criteria for evaluating candidates for management promotions include their demonstrated commitment to achieving equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace?	☐	☐	
Are equity, diversity and inclusion principles incorporated into staff performance review processes?	☐	☐	

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST: ACCOMMODATION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Are there clear written policies and procedures in place in the workplace to facilitate the request for reasonable accommodations?	☐	☐	
Are managers and supervisors trained on how to recognize and respond to accommodations requests?	☐	☐	
Are there systems in place to ensure the confidentiality of any accommodations requests?	☐	☐	
Are accommodation requests tracked?	☐	☐	
Are employees provided with option at work, such as flexible schedules, which allow them to better manage their time and create a healthy life/work balance?	☐	☐	

ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR CREATING A LGBTQ2S+ INCLUSIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

- Don't assume everyone is heterosexual.
- If specific significant days or events are highlighted for other employees, annual Gay Pride celebrations (usually held during the month of June) should be similarly marked.
- Acknowledge the relationships of staff equally by ensuring that anniversaries, births and marriages/union ceremonies are celebrated in the same way.
- Grant unrestricted restroom, locker room, and shower access to be used according to an employee's new gender role.
- Use the appropriate gender pronoun as indicated by your employees.
- Use the term 'partners' when inviting spouses to social activities. This is a more inclusive and non-gender specific term, and includes same-sex couples.
- Never reveal a LGBTQ2S+ person's sexual orientation or gender identity without permission.
- Please use the City of Hamilton Trans Protocol guide for more information and tips.

BUILDING YOUR EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CAPACITY

To enhance your workplace's diversity competencies, employees can participate in a variety of learning opportunities including the following:

1. Take diversity-related training including positive space and accessibility sessions.
2. Attend presentations focusing on topics which enhance an understanding and appreciation of diverse communities.
3. Pursue community engagement opportunities with diverse groups.
4. Engage in program development which impacts diverse communities.
5. Participate in diverse communities' networking opportunities.

IDEAS FOR EMBRACING DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

- Create diversity calendars to avoid scheduling important meetings on major cultural holidays.
- Be aware of and provide time off for culturally and religiously significant events and days. Consider offering a float day for employees to use at their discretion to observe such events or days.
- Permit flexible schedules so that employees who observe religious practices can arrange their schedules to accommodate their job and their beliefs.
- Keep up-to-date information about local LGBTQ2S+ groups and organizations and other relevant resources. This will assist with staff awareness, referrals, and networking.
- Recognize and acknowledge special days and events such as International Women's Day, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, International Day for the Elimination of Racism, Gay Pride celebrations, International Day Against Transphobia, Seniors Day, National Aboriginal Day, Black History Month, Kwanzaa, Diwali, Eid, Chinese New Year, Seniors Day, Holocaust Memorial Day.
- Make sure your events are accessible to all.

Source: Diversity at Work, HRCouncil Toolkit

DRAFT

INCLUSIVE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION   STRATEGIES

INCLUSIVE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

> **"Using an equity-based lens allows for a deepened analysis of the impact on one group compared to another. "**

While inclusive policy making enhances transparency, accountability, public participation and builds civic capacity, it also offers a way for governments to improve their policy performance by working with all community stakeholders to deliver quality service for all. ("Inclusive policy making"), in Government at a Glance 2013, OECD Publishing, Paris)

Using an equity and inclusion lens in policy development is a valuable approach in assessing the impact of new policies on target groups such as women, LGBTQ+, seniors, low income people, youth and so on. Using an equity-based lens allows for a deepened analysis of the impact on one group compared to another. For example, there is a growing call for governments including municipalities to adopt a gender equity lens to ensure women are not left behind when budget decisions are made. A gender-based analysis would take age, income, culture, ethnicity, and other intersecting factors into account.

In essence, an equitable and inclusive policy development and implementation strategy will ensure that all stakeholders and those likely to be impacted by the policy receive information about the policy under consideration, understand the information they have received, and are invited to participate in its development. All key stakeholders should have an opportunity to respond to the proposed policy before it is approved or comes into effect.

INCLUSIVE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES

- Inclusive policies are written in plain language that is simple and easy to understand. They should also be available in different languages so that they may be understood by non-English speaking stakeholders likely to be impacted by the policy.
- Inclusive policies should be developed with the participation of a broad spectrum of stakeholders to seek input from, and address the differing needs of, a diverse population.
- The effectiveness of an inclusive policy, once implemented, is measured by the extent to which it creates an environment within which all stakeholders feel included and empowered to access resources, opportunities, and see themselves reflected.
- At the workplace level, inclusive policies contain provisions and guidelines that support the full integration of all employees into an equitably functioning workplace.
- Inclusive policies contain clear direction about what stakeholders can do if the policy adversely impacts them.
- Inclusive policies also include information about reporting mechanisms and potential consequences if one fails to follow the policy.

A proposed policy should be written in plain language so that all stakeholders easily understand the content. While many policies have a small stakeholder pool because they are intended for internal organizational use, other policies have a much broader reach and impact a large group of diverse individuals or groups.

Personnel and staff who are responsible for developing inclusive policies should look at two aspects of inclusive policy development: Process (How is the policy being developed? Is the process inclusive?) and content (Is the content of the policy inclusive and reflective of the stakeholders that will be impacted by the policy?).

Governments should ensure that all policies and practices are examined for impact in regard to access, equity, and inclusion for diverse communities and vulnerable populations.

Listed below is a series of reflective questions to help evaluate your process and content's inclusiveness:

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST:
PROCESS USED TO DEVELOP INCLUSIVE POLICIES

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Do we correctly identify all the stakeholders likely to be impacted by this policy?	☐	☐	
Do we invite representatives from all stakeholders to participate in the policy development phase from the beginning?	☐	☐	
Do we engage the community in planning, decision-making and evaluation of policies?	☐	☐	
Do we collaborate with diverse community groups to engage the target population?	☐	☐	
Do we welcome and listen to feedback from different stakeholder groups likely to be impacted by this policy?	☐	☐	
Are policy development meetings inclusive (space and process) and supportive of stakeholder's input and participation?	☐	☐	

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Do we utilize available distribution resources (community groups, agencies, diverse networks, etc.) to ensure that information on a proposed policy is distributed to a broad range of stakeholders?	☐	☐	
Do we monitor and evaluate communications about the proposed policy to ensure that it is effective, inclusive and reaches all stakeholders?	☐	☐	
Do we offer multiple ways to engage different stakeholders including aboriginal members?	☐	☐	
Do we consider how culturally specific knowledge and practices and diverse perspectives will be reflected in policy and practice?	☐	☐	
In scanning, scoping, reviewing or researching the issue, do we consider evidence that addresses the impact of a new policy on diverse groups?	☐	☐	
Do we subject new policies to an intersectional analysis to eliminate unintended adverse consequences?	☐	☐	
Do we consider ways that a policy might benefit some or disadvantage others? For example, how will women, seniors, youth, LGBTQ2S+, people living on a low income, women, racialized communities, Indigenous people, faith groups, and persons with disabilities be affected by a new policy?	☐	☐	

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST:
CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Does the policy reflect the needs and concerns noted by the people consulted in the development process?	☐	☐	
Does the policy reflect equity and inclusion in terms of all aspects of diversity such as sex/gender expression, religion, ability, age, culture, and socioeconomic status, etc.?	☐	☐	
Do we consider how the data collected will be useful in improving services, programs, and resource allocation for diverse groups?	☐	☐	
Is the policy that is being implemented easy to understand?	☐	☐	
Is the intent of the policy inclusive and does it enable all stakeholders to feel respected and included?	☐	☐	
Does the policy include flexible accommodation strategies without contributing to stigma or alienation?	☐	☐	
Does the content of the policy accommodate visual, auditory and linguistic needs or other physical, mental or social needs of stakeholders?	☐	☐	
Does the policy provide guidelines for possible consequences if the policy is not adhered to?	☐	☐	
Do we consider culturally specific knowledge, practices and diverse perspectives in new policies?	☐	☐	
Do we consider using an exception clause or multiple/different policies to address the needs and limitations of different groups or populations?	☐	☐	
Do we communicate our policies to the full diversity of people affected?	☐	☐	

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST:
RESEARCH AND INFORMATION GATHERING:

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Do we use an intersectional approach to analyze research? This is important, as multiple forms of discrimination can intersect and have a compound effect e.g. people living on a low income who have disabilities, women who are seniors, and women of colour, etc.	☐	☐	
Do we ensure the diversity of women's voices in all aspects of the research process?	☐	☐	
Do we include community- based research and practice and diverse perspectives in the policy development process?	☐	☐	
Do we ensure the data gathered captures the diversity of the population? In other words, has the data been broken down (or disaggregated) to make differences visible?	☐	☐	
When using gender-neutral language (people, head of household, the homeless, sole-support parent, immigrants), do we make sure to distinguish differences between women and men in each specific group, e.g. female heads of household versus male heads of household?	☐	☐	
How might we consult with the people most affected by this issue to ensure the reliability of our data, approach and findings? For example, do we ask community leaders about the cultural appropriateness of the data or approach?	☐	☐	

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST:
RESEARCH AND INFORMATION GATHERING:

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐	COMMENTS
Are we making any assumptions that we need to verify? For example, will all parents in a program will be heterosexual?	☐	☐	
Do we consult in a language or medium that is accessible to the group?	☐	☐	
Do we consult community leaders with experience in a subject area? If not, how will we do this?	☐	☐	
Does our final report include findings on the specific equity and inclusion concerns we identified?	☐	☐	
How will we report the findings to people who were involved in the research?	☐	☐	

—SECTION 5—

EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN COMMUNICATIONS

EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN COMMUNICATIONS

The essence of an equitable and inclusive communication strategy is to ensure that all stakeholders and anyone likely to be impacted by the communication receive the information and are able respond to it. The information that is being communicated to stakeholders should be clear, direct, easy to understand, and employ several communication tools, including pictures and sound, to convey information. In addition, a variety of communication channels should be used to prevent unintended exclusions.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

 People have different communication needs (literacy, visual and auditory) and consume information differently. Communication materials should be varied and able to address the differing communication needs of individuals.

 Communication materials should be readily accessible, distributed in a variety of locations, and available in both traditional and non-traditional spaces.

 Written texts should be simple, easy to understand, and available in the different languages and cultural frameworks of the stakeholders to whom the information is directed.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION LENS TO COMMUNICATIONS

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST: AUDIENCE AND DISTRIBUTION

	QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐
1	Do we correctly identify all the target audiences that require this communication?	☐	☐
2	Do we include everyone that needs to be included?	☐	☐
3	Have we left anyone out?	☐	☐
4	Do we use the recommended font size in our communications materials?	☐	☐
5	Do we use a variety of communication tools and diverse platforms to reach members of the target group?	☐	☐
6	Do we translate materials into different languages?	☐	☐
7	Do we use the appropriate pronouns as chosen by transgendered individuals?	☐	☐
8	Do we use a variety of available distribution resources (community groups, agencies, diverse networks, diverse media etc.) to ensure that communications reach a diverse audience?	☐	☐
9	Do we seek and use input from diverse groups to ensure that all communications address the needs of the diverse populations?	☐	☐

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS CHECKLIST: CONTENT

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	☐	☐
1 Is the content appropriate for and inclusive of diverse audiences?	☐	☐
2 Is the language used simple, easy to understand and respectful of diversity?	☐	☐
3 Are the images being used in our communications inclusive and respectful of the diverse populations? Do they appear reflective of the population?	☐	☐
4 Is the communication free from jargon, slang, colloquialisms and unfamiliar expressions?	☐	☐
5 Is inclusive language used in speech, written materials and other programming materials?	☐	☐
6 Do we use accessibility/inclusion symbols on marketing materials?	☐	☐
7 Does the content of our communications reflect equity (in language and imagery) in terms of all aspects of diversity such as gender, gender expression, age, ability, religion culture, sexual orientation and socio-economic status, etc.?	☐	☐
8 Does the content of our communications accommodate visual, auditory, or linguistic abilities?	☐	☐
9 Is our communications content readily accessible over a variety of platforms?	☐	☐
10 Does our communications content contain information about the source of the communication and give directions for providing feedback?	☐	☐

The reflective questions listed above are a few considerations for creating inclusive communications.

At a minimum, inclusive communication requires awareness, sensitivity, and an ability to reach out to and communicate with diverse communities in a thoughtful, respectful, and open manner without assumptions, stereotypes, or prejudgments.

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